

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /089 W
-----151821Z 051073 /46

R 142200Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL BELIZE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5471
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
USUN NEW YORK 0112
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELIZE 0113

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR PFOR GT BH UK
SUBJECT: DEFENSE OF BELIZE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF OFFICIAL GOB RELEASE CARRIED BY BELIZE
RADIO DURING WEEKEND:

"FEBRUARY 11, 1977 - 7 PM - MARTI

IT WAS ANNOUNCED TODAY BY THE DEPUTY PREMIER AND THE MINISTER OF
HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON C L B ROGERS, THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED
FOR THE SETTING UP OF A BELIZE DEFENSE FORCE. THE ANNOUNCEMENT
SAYS THE LEVEL OF FUNDING HAS BEEN AGREED WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM
GOVERNMENT FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROJECT WHICH WILL BEGIN
THIS YEAR. THE FORCE WILL BE AN INFANTRY BATALLION, MADE UP OF A
REGULAR AND A VOLUNTEER ELEMENT, AS WAS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED BY
THE DEPUTY PREMIER. AS A FIRST STEP A TEAM OF SIX MEN FROM THE
UNITED KINGDOM WILL BE ARRIVING IN BELIZE NEXT WEEK TO HOLD DIS-
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CUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTER AND APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS. THEY WILL
EXAMINE THE PROJECT ON THE GROUND, AND WORK OUT THE DETAILS OF THE
PLAN. THE TEAM IS BEING LED BY MAJOR GENERAL LECKEY AND COLONEL
AYRES. (ENDS)"

2. COMMENT. RUMORS ARE AWAFTH HERE THAT RECENT GOB-HMG
TALKS IN LONDON PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD REALIZATION

OF BELIZE INDEPENDENCE ASPIRATIONS. TWO LOCAL SOURCES HAVE TOLD
US HMG NOW READY TO CONSIDER AT LEAST AN IMPLICIT DEFENSE GUARANTEE
FOR PERIOD OF THREE TO FIVE YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE. I AM WON-
DERING WHETHER BRITISH MIGHT BE THINKING OF RE-CONSTITUTING PRESENT
FORCES IN BELIZE AS A TRAINING MISSION IF TALKS WITP GUATEMALA REACH
AN IMPASSE. THIS MIGHT AFFORD THEM A MEANS OF EXTRICATION FROM
BELIZE WITH HONOR OR AT LEAST WITH A REASONABLE FACSIMILE
THEREOF.
GAWF

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BUILDUP, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BELIZE00113
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770053-1060
Format: TEL
From: BELIZE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770246/aaaabogc.tel
Line Count: 71
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 34046ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3332539
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEFENSE OF BELIZE
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, MORG, GT, BH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/34046ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009